

of those subordinate ones, which may have conspired to prevent the success of evangelical religion among a class of persons that I have in view, I mean those of refined taste, whose feelings, concerning what is great and excellent, have been disciplined to accord to a literary or philosophical standard. But even had there been less of this natural aversion in such minds, or had there been none, some of the causes which have acted on them would have tended, necessarily, to produce an effect injurious to the claims of pure Christianity.—I wish to illustrate several of these causes, after briefly describing the antichristian feelings in which I have observed that effect.

It is true that many persons of taste have, without any formal disbelief of the Christian truth, so little concern about religion in any shape, that the unthinking dislike to the evangelical principles, occasionally rising and passing among their transient moods of feeling with no distinctness of apprehension, hardly deserves to be described. These are to be assigned, whatever may be their faculties or improvements, to the multitude of triflers relatively to the gravest concerns, on whom we can pronounce only the general condemnation of irreligion, their feelings not being sufficiently marked for a more discriminative censure. But the aversion is of a more defined character, as it exists in a mind too serious for the follies of the world and the neglect of all religion, and in which the very sentiment itself becomes, at times, the subject of painful and apprehensive reflection, from an internal monition that it is an unhappy symptom, if the truth should be that the religious system which excites the disolacencv, has really the sanction of divine revelation. If a person in this condition of mind disclosed himself to you, he would describe how the elevated sentiment, inspired by the conteriplate of other sublime subjects, is confounded, and sinks mortified into the heart, when this new subject is presented to his view. It seems to require almost a total change of his mental habits to admit this as the most interesting subject of all, while yet he dares not reject the authority which supports its claim. The dignity of religion, as a general and refined speculation, he may have long acknowledged ; but it appears to him as if it lost that aspect of dignity, in taking the specific form of the evangelical system ; just as if an ethereal being were reduced to combine